



Elstead, Ockley Common, Peper Harow

Distance 17 km=10½ miles, easy walking

Region: Surrey

Written: 24/01/10

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Revised: 05/09/11

Refreshments: Elstead, Eashing

Map: Explorer 145 (Guildford) *but the maps in this guide should be sufficient*

Problems, changes? *We depend on your feedback: feedback@fancyfreewalks.org*

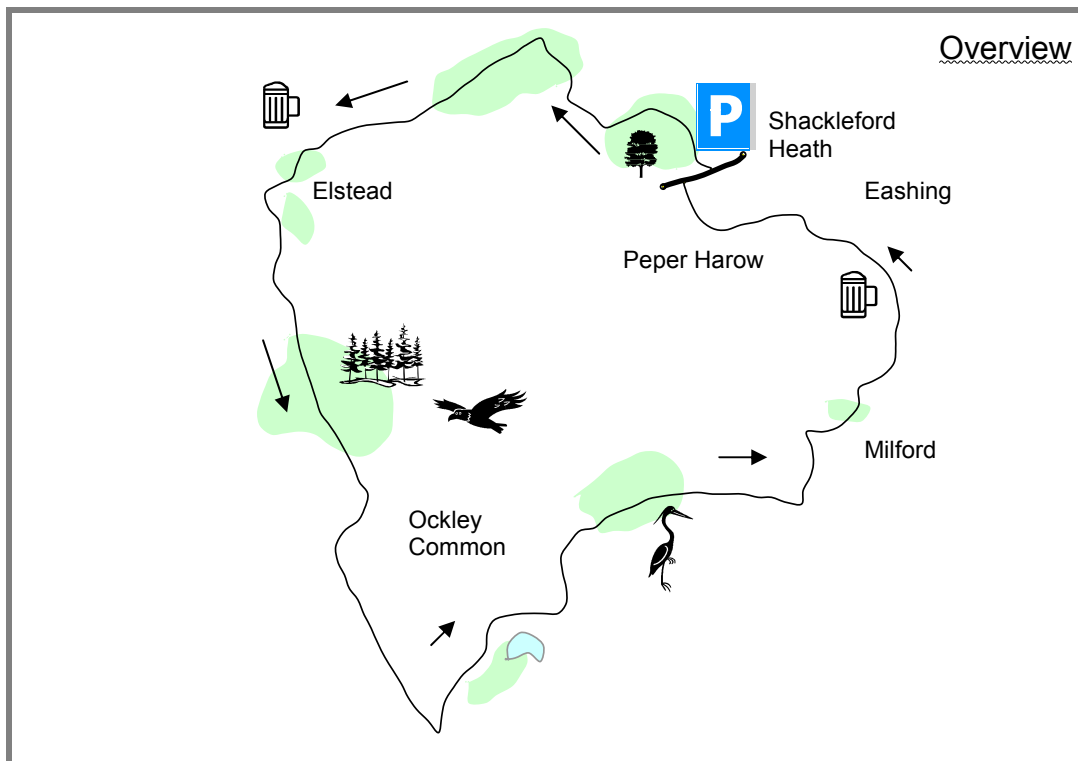
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Woodland, moorland, villages, ancient bridges

In Brief



This is a most interesting circular walk, suitable for all times of the year. It passes through some marshy natural Surrey landscapes of unmatched beauty and after every turn there seems to be a surprise. There is some boggy ground which can generally be skirted round, but good shoes or boots are generally advisable. There are a few patches of nettles, so long trousers are preferable. This walk is fine for a dog but please be aware of the ground-nesting birds and the private grounds.

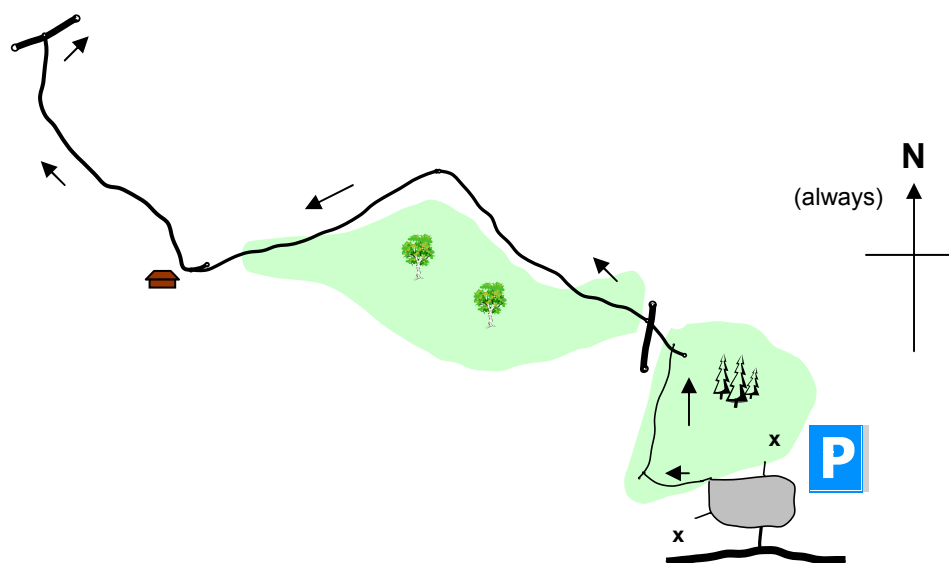


The walk starts at the **Shackleford Heath** car park, postcode GU8 6AY.
For more details, see at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

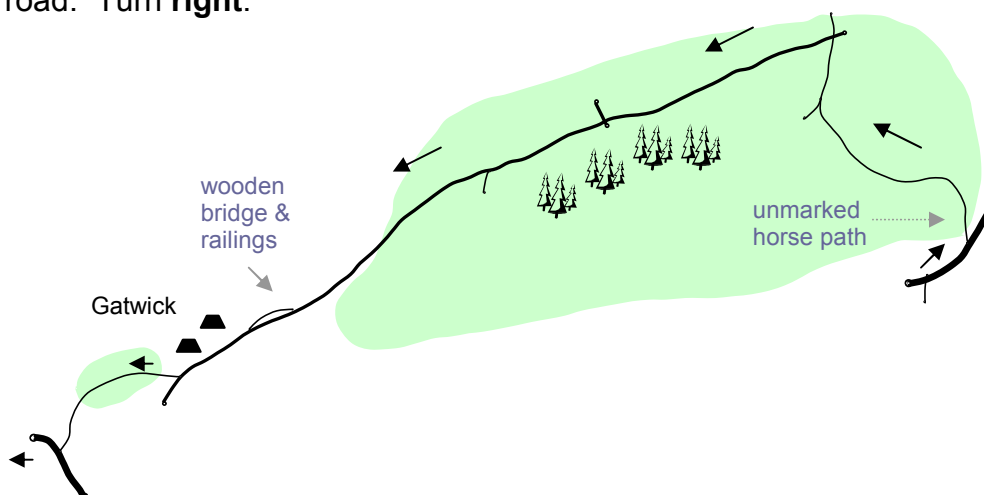
The Walk

Leg 1: Shackleford Heath to Elstead, 5½ km (3 miles)

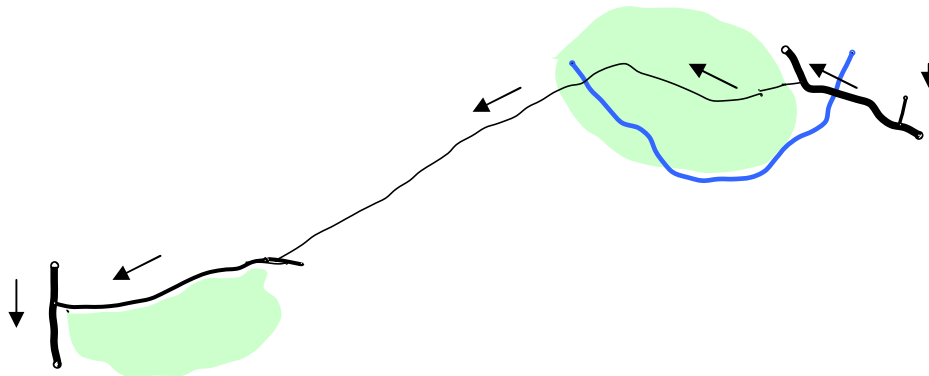
- 1 From the car park, take the path leading off sideways from the back left hand corner (best seen from the mini-map). This leads through the woodland to a T-junction. Turn **right** here on a narrow path that runs parallel to a road visible about 50m over on the left, winds through woodland and reaches a wider crossing path. Turn **left** on the crossing path and, on coming to a T-junction with a bridleway, turn **left** to the road and cross it to a bridleway on the other side. After some distance, the bridleway curves left beside a ditch. The path reaches the first house of Warren Lodge. Turn **right** here on a driveway, follow it all the way to a road and turn **right** there.



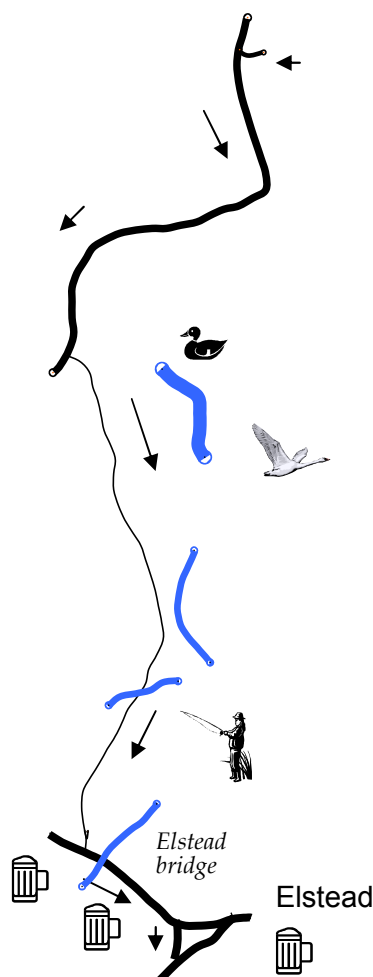
- 2 In about 80m, at the start of woods on the left, turn **left** on an unsigned path uphill. The path soon bends right and left into the wood and is joined by a path from the left. 70m after this, you reach a major 4-way junction of tracks. Turn sharp **left** on a wide woodland track. After some distance, ignore a track right and later a path left, keeping straight ahead at all times until the first houses of the settlement of Gatwick come into view. At this point, you will see some wooden railings with a little bridge on the right and this is a rather charming way to avoid any mud on the horse track. Shortly, just past Kingshott Cottage, turn **right** on a path. This leads out via a drive to a road. Turn **right**.



- 3 The road crosses a stream and bends right. Leave it here by continuing straight ahead on a signed brideway which winds and crosses a bridge. Go through a gate into a meadow and, keeping the same direction, cross the meadow to a small wooden gate on the other side. Turn **right** on a track. At the end of the track, turn **left** on the road, Fulbrook Lane. *On the right soon is the entrance to Fulbrook House which Peter Sellers and his wife Brit Ekland bought and later sold to Beatle Ringo Starr.*



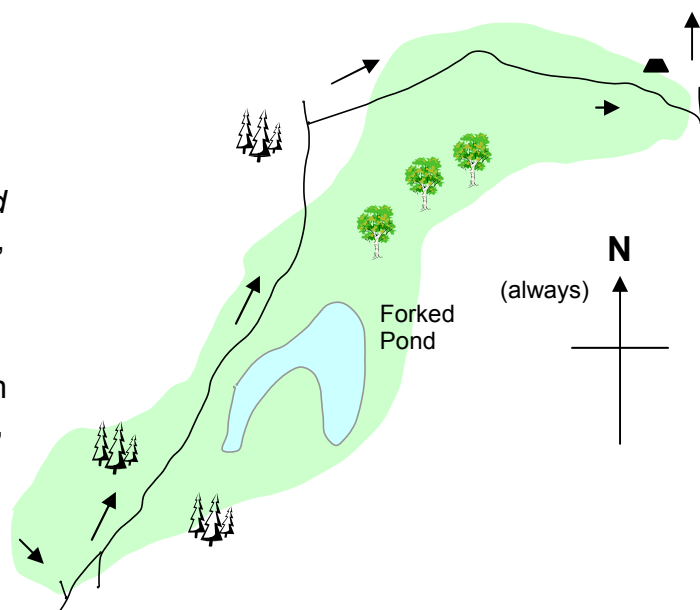
- 4 Just before the white house *Paulshott Cottage*, turn **left** over a stile onto a signposted footpath. The path leads over another stile and then runs beside the River Wey, going over more stiles and bridges, a favourite spot for anglers, and reaches a road. *The Mill pub (Fullers) on the right is worth considering for a pause with its lake, swans and waterwheel. It was occupied by Oliver Cromwell's roundheads in the Civil War and then burned down.* Turn **left** at the road, passing over Elstead Bridge. *Elstead Bridge was built in the 1300s, now reinforced to carry the westbound traffic. You will have crossed the Wey by the new bridge but it is worth crossing to the other side to get a good view of the remarkable sturdy old bridge.* Continue past the *Golden Fleece* and turn **right** at the Green past *Forge Cottage* and the general store, which is open on Sundays.



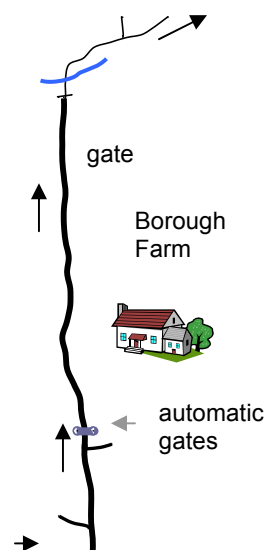
Elstead owes its historic importance to its vital position on the River Wey, with its ancient bridge. It has served as a billet for troops undergoing training on Hankley Common. A fascinating account of the town, including Gillian Drew's on-line book [Elstead Village History](http://www.elstead.org.uk/history) will be found in www.elstead.org.uk/history. The "Woolpack" on the other side of the Green has fresh seafood daily, an "executive chef" and several real ales and is open all day at weekends. It also offers a "free sausage hour".

wider track. Soon after, the path is blocked by gorse, which you can simply go round, and then there is a boardwalk and a wooden plank bridge. On meeting the treeline, keep ahead on a less well-defined path in the same direction through pines. You soon reach a wide track. Cross over the track onto a narrow path and in 20m turn **left** on a wide crossing path.

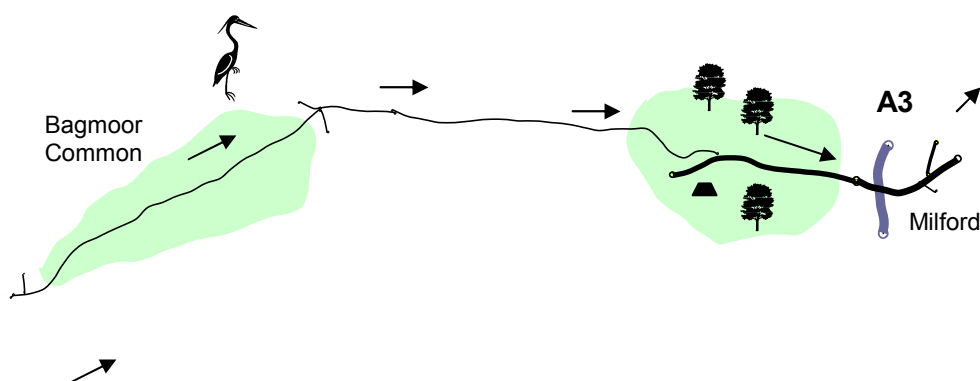
- 3 The path is joined from the right by another path and then runs alongside a fence on the right. Where the fence soon bends away to the right, keep straight ahead on the main path. Soon a lake, the *Forked Pond*, comes into view. If you wish, you can take the right fork that runs along the lakeside and rejoins the path before a house. Otherwise, keep to the main path. About 200m after the lake, at a post with arrows, turn **right** through a wooden gate. Follow this bridleway for some distance until finally you go through a gate next to *Little Borough*. Fork **left** to a T-junction and go **left** on a tarmac driveway.



- 4 Ahead of you are two fine iron gates. Don't turn aside or look for a tradesman's entrance. The footpath really *is* through the gates and, like any house guest, you need only press the button on the post and the gates will open for you. Follow the drive through the grounds past the impressive house of Borough Farm and other houses of the estate until eventually you go round a gate and then over a bridge by a ford. The track bends right and passes a bridge on the right where you keep straight ahead by the stream. Soon you reach Bagmoor Common a nature reserve of great charm, rich in wildlife.

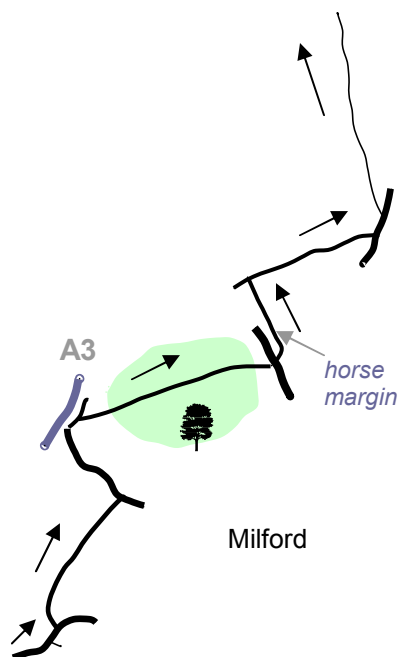


- 5 At a fingerpost, keep ahead, ignoring a left turn. Eventually the footpath runs under wires and across a grassy mossy area by a house. Veer **right** here over a bridge, across a watermeadow and by an avoidable stile, following a fenced path. The path goes over a double stile and through a pleasant grassy strip. Next, it passes a house, *Pucklands*, and goes over a stile. Take the first **left** turn, on a track which soon joins the driveway and goes over a bridge across the A3 trunk road. The driveway, now a lane, passes a beautifully restored house appropriately called Chimneys. Ignore a footpath right and take a bridleway **left**.



Leg 3: Milford to Shackleford Heath, 3½ km (2½ miles)

- 1 The track passes a number of attractive farm buildings on the outskirts of Milford. At the end, turn **left** on a road. A bridleway runs beside the road, curves right and then right again through a wooden gate (*not* the metal gate into the meadow) and runs through woodland to a main road. Cross the road carefully to a path on the other side with a fingerpost indicating *horse margin*. The path bends left parallel to the road and meets a T-junction. Turn **right** here away from the road, following a path between fields. On reaching a road, turn **left** and in 50m turn **left** again on a path running diagonally across a field. Follow the direction of the fingerpost on a path that is a little unclear in the winter season. As a guide, you will pass a pile of stones with another fingerpost which, at the time of writing, is lying on its side. In high summer the path may be concealed under the high crops: just persevere. (If the crops are wet after rain, you could go round by the road.) Aim for a space between trees on the other side where there is a slope.



- 2 Descend on a path down the steep slope to a stile and road and turn **left**. The road passes the *Stag on the River* pub. This is your last possible refreshment stop.

The Stag on the River is perfectly sited on the river bank and offers good fresh food. The ales are predictable. The Stag tends to get busy at weekends. If you want to reserve a table inside, ring 01483-421-568.

Next is Eashing Mill.

Eashing Mill was an important paper mill. There was a drying loft on the right and the mill house, rag house and a corn mill on the left. It was rebuilt as a machine paper mill in 1832 which closed in 1899 and is now offices.

A little further on, you reach Eashing Bridge.
[2011: the bridge is undergoing reconstruction but pedestrians can cross.]

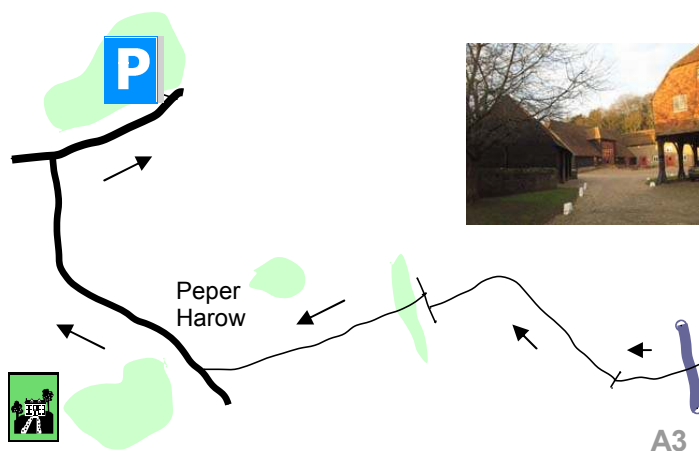
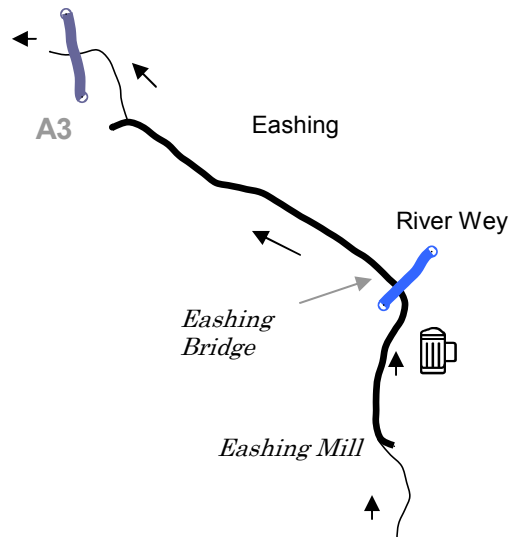
Eashing Bridge is another fine ancient bridge over the River Wey. It was built in the 1300s by monks of Waverley Abbey.

Cross the bridge into the village of Eashing.

Eashing is known by many only as a name seen from the A3 but it is in fact a perfect small village with mostly period houses, some very fine, some small and tranquil.

Opposite the filling station, turn **right** on a track uphill and turn **left** at the top over a bridge to cross the A3 road.

- 3 On the other side, go through a gate and veer **right** on a horse track, following the track a quarter left as it rounds the corner of the field. On reaching a line of pines, go **right** through a metal gate and in just 5m, at a crossing path, turn **left** through a wide belt of trees. Cross a stile into a meadow and go straight ahead across its centre, over a low fence and to a gate into the village of Peper Harow.



Peper Harow is unique, a tiny tranquil village with fascinating and beautiful buildings. There has been a settlement here since Saxon times and it appears in the Domesday Book. The Saxon word hearge denoted a holy place, probably pagan. Piper (Pippa or Pipard) was a family name, recorded amongst those

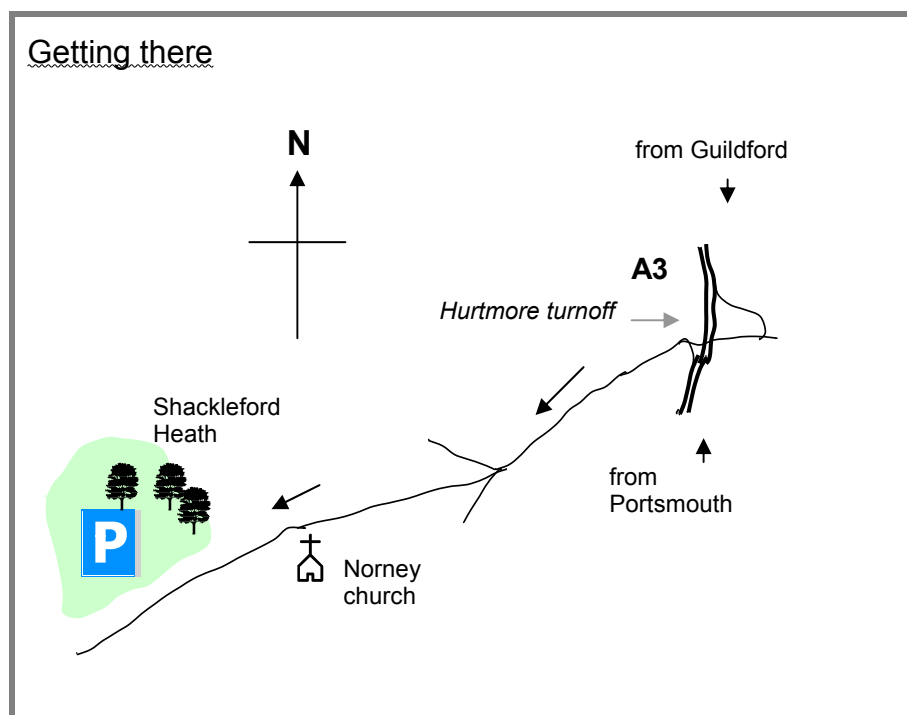
who fought at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. Today the whole of Peper Harow is a private residential estate, a conservation area and home to 30 families. The Park, landscaped by Capability Brown, is the home to muntjac deer, rabbits, swans, ducks, snakes and frogs, and many birds. Peper Harow House and the Carriage House (with the turret) were designed by Sir William Chambers in 1765. The village is also home to an ancient cricket club. The church of St Nicholas, dating from 1301, has an ancient yew tree which has been dated to at least 1,500 years. The church was badly damaged by fire in 2007 and is [2011 still] being restored. Note the fine converted barns, one entirely on stilts, acting as a large car port. The Peper Harow residential community is famed for its pioneering work with abused and disturbed adolescents.

Follow the lane out of the village and at a junction turn **right** on the main road. In a short distance, you reach the Shackleford Heath car park on the left where the walk began.

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Getting there

By car: To get to the **Shackleford Heath** car park from the London area or the M25: take the A3 through Guildford and exit at the sign for "Hurtmore, Norney". Turn **right** under the A3. At a 3-way junction keep straight ahead following the sign for St Mary's Church. About 600m=700 yds after passing the church, look out for the woodland of Shackleford Heath on the right and park there under a wooden bar in the car park.



By train: To Milford. Join the circular walk from near there.